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# THE CEA CRITIC

Vol. No. XX—No.2—Published at Springfield, Mass. Editorial Office, University of Mass., Amherst, Mass. February, 1958

## COMPOSITION STANDARDS

The report of the CEA Committee on Composition Standards, as summarized in a recent CEA Critic, indicates a deep dissatisfaction with the current test of English composition in the College Board Series (ECT) and a commitment to the General Composition Test (GCT) which was abandoned two years ago. As chairman of the committee responsible for the current test, I feel an obligation to make some statement about your report, particularly because I am in sympathy with many of its assumptions and objectives.

Let me say at once that I am an English teacher, not an educational statistician or testing expert. What I know of tests I have had to learn through my six years of service on the committee; what I know of statistics is scarcely enough to keep me afloat in the laborious activities of that committee. I can recall having heard Mr. John Valley, of ETS, and Mrs. Earle Eley, of Chicago, reach quite contrary conclusions from identical data on the GCT; in the face of such expert and equally disinterested division, I can only repeat Mercurio's oburgation or attempt to reason from data which I am competent to assess.

The cold facts of that controversy seem to be these: the statistical validity of GCT is certainly no greater than that of the ECT; the reliability of reading is certainly no greater and very probably somewhat lower, though perhaps not significantly so. For the sake of getting to ground where I feel more confident, let us say that validity and reliability, if not equal, could at least be made so. What remains?

For one thing, cost remains. The figures I have seen indicate that the cost of preparing, administering, and grading GCT, by the methods used (a committee for preparation, local administration, and a conference of readers drawn from various parts of the country and congregated under supervision for the necessary week or longer) was, on the average, approximately seven times that of the ECT, a cost so great that it could not possibly be passed on to students in the form of an increased fee or absorbed by the other parts of the testing program.

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## THE CEA CO-OPERATES

Four associations representing American teachers of English from the elementary to collegiate levels have launched a series of three exploratory studies to define basic issues in the teaching of English in this country.

The groups involved, acting under a \$25,000 grant from the Ford Foundation, are the Modern Language Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, the College English Association, and the American Studies Association.

Dr. George Winchester Stone, Jr., executive secretary of the MLA, said the studies will involve twenty-five leading teachers in the English and education fields. The first conference was held for three days starting Jan. 17 at NYU's Gould House. Additional three-day conferences will take place in mid-April and in mid-June.

CEA officers participating are: Henry W. Sams (President); Maxwell H. Goldberg

(Executive Director); and national directors Carvel Collins, G. Bruce Dearing, and Autry Nell Wiley.

Representatives of the four associations hope that the studies will lead ultimately to a projected major study of the entire English-teaching field in the United States. Prof. Albert H. Marckwardt, University of Michigan, will chair the three conferences.

The areas to be studied are: composition and communication, reading and study of literature, and the training of English teachers on the undergraduate and graduate levels.

"We have outlined some basic issues," Dr. Stone said, acting as spokesman for the four groups, "and we hope to investigate, clarify, and define them further, to state the problems, and to suggest ways for possible improvements."

## Doctoral Studies in English

Everyone honestly concerned with strengthening college English will be grateful for the report *Doctoral Studies in English and Preparation for Teaching* and will wish to see it so revised that it will work its way into the thinking of the ten or twelve departments which educate most of our scholar teachers.

We have in mind less than a hundred distinguished professors, the men who plan graduate programs, direct the seminars, and supervise the theses. We may assume that most of them are somewhat removed from the realities of undergraduate teaching, but we also know that they are men of intelligence and good will.

We believe that the one hundred will think out whatever reorientation may be needed when we, of the "teaching interest," have said clearly that we are not satisfied with many of the young Ph.D.'s and doctoral candidates who come to us. The purpose of this note is to get this dissatisfaction firmly expressed.

Entirely too many Ph.D.'s and doctoral candidates write and speak inadequately and lack what William Riley Parker calls "feeling for an audience." Hence shrewd departmental chairmen begin to look around for young men trained in speech or journalism or linguistics as they build their composition or communication staffs. Literature? Many of the young men are strong in English literature, and some have moved

on to American studies. Few, however, know Homer, Sophocles, Dante, Voltaire, Balzac, Dostoevsky, and Camus in either the original tongue or translation; and few have anything more than crotchety awareness of the nature and the importance of the popular media. Only one in a hundred has gripped a view of values and of human personality which will stand up under the scrutiny of tough minds outside the English department.

Thus the typical product of our graduate departments is weak in the subject matter in which courses in general literature and in composition/communication should be founded. Since he believes in the adequacy of his education, he feels little need for filling up major gaps. English-as-general-education, the principal product of even the university English department, remains a poor, starved thing, a disgrace to the profession, considerably because the men for teaching rich courses are just about unavailable.

Too many Ph. D.'s and doctoral candidates lack teaching skill. Subjected as undergraduates and graduates to masters who could afford to ignore motivation and the learning process, they assume that these matters may be safely ignored in teaching classes made up chiefly of freshman or sophomore non-major students. They have little understanding of the area in which

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## THE CEA CRITIC

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"The apostrophe is utterly useless and could be dispensed with" said H. J. Meehan, speaking at the meeting of the Educational Institute of Scotland in Glasgow, as reported in the *New York Times*.

Kathrine Koller, former national president of CEA, is resigning her administrative duties as head of the Dept. of English at the University of Rochester to devote full time to teaching and research. Wilbur D. Dunkel will succeed her as chairman.

Copies of the CEA Ph. D. Report can be obtained by writing to the CEA national office, Box 472, Amherst, Massachusetts.

A Summer School of Linguistics will be held at the Univ. of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada, during July and August.

## SCIENCE AND HUMANITIES

Joseph Gallant, in his *SCIENCE* article, proposes that we "gear" the humanities to science.

If this were carried out it would in the end produce a civilization much like that of ancient Sparta or modern Russia.

What we need is to gear science to the humanities. For if man is to survive, the control of nature must itself be controlled by ethical and spiritual values.

Literature can contribute importantly toward this end. But it must be literature studied less as history and technique, more as an expression of human values. It follows that the most appropriate reading will

not be in the nature books named by Mr. Gallant, but in Homer, the Bible, Shakespeare, Dickens, Hawthorne, Mark Twain and such writers of our century as Willa Cather and Robert Frost, all of them concerned with the nature of man rather than the nature of nature.

The nature of nature is the highly important business of science. The experts gravely needed for the future will emerge readily as soon as mathematics and physics are adequately required and adequately taught in the high schools.

Norman Foerster  
Santa Barbara

## Which Generation, Indeed!

(Comment on Joseph E. Baker's article "Which Generation?" in the December, 1957, *CEA Critic*)

What an inverted pyramid of an argument has Joseph E. Baker constructed!

First step. He swallows whole the Nation's "careful young men" business.

Second step. He asserts that parents, politicians, big-businessmen, generals, and television showmen (is this list exhaustive?) have played only minor roles in making these young men what they are. Parents et al do not matter because intellectuals (college students are intellectuals) have "never" permitted themselves to be "led by the nose by the bourgeoisie or by the brass," those two terms subsuming, presumably, all parents of all the intellectuals in question.

First leap. But students DO let themselves be influenced by their teachers!

Second leap. And some teachers are more influential than others—and they are the teachers of English!

Helmut E. Gerber, Purdue, has issued the first number of a new publication, *English Fiction in Transition* (1880-1920), which is to be the newsletter of the MLA Conference on English Fiction from 1880 to 1920. Professor Gerber would like to add to his mailing list the names of scholars interested in this period and would welcome for subsequent issues short articles on some aspect of the period or analyses of individual novels or groups of novels. At present, there is no charge for this new publication.

The first number of *English Fiction in Transition* contains bibliographies of Bennett, Butler, Cannan, Crackenthorpe, Graham, De Morgan, Ford, Forster, Galsworthy, Gissing, Wells, etc.

Third leap. And some teachers of English are the most influential of all—and they are the "small but aggressive minority . . . hard at work with the efficiency of doctrinaires."

Fourth leap—and out of sight! The principal instrument used by this hard core of subversive professors in their work of demolishing the younger generation is Brooks and Warren, *Understanding Poetry*.

There is only one thing the contriver of this ingenious piece of argument forgot to do: he failed to give us the names of the 57 hardest core followers of B and W so that we might have their scalps.

But I think Prof. Baker was kidding.

Don A. Keister  
Univ. of Akron

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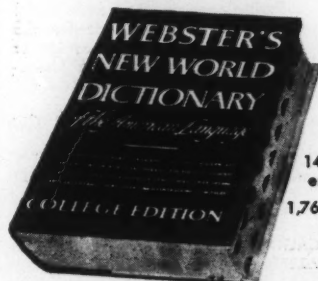
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## Jibberings Of An Old Ghost

Things are happening behind the scenes on the stage of our public education; and an old ghost from his front-row seat can hear promising but perplexing noises from behind the curtain. Only a few actors have as yet poked their heads out, and no one has made a formal entrance and begun the drama, although there have been undoubtedly some rehearsals here and there.

Can it be that some of the many fads and fancies which have so greatly troubled us old spooks are being cleared off the stage, and furniture is being rearranged and some of it dumped in order to set up a sort of old-homestead background with the three R's dominating the coming scene?

Thinking back we recall the many intimate normal schools which were scattered throughout our counties and provided throughout our counties and provided would-be young school teachers with various devices tested by experience in teaching, and various standards and ideals. But then came teacher organization, and a realization that school boards throughout the county were showing a preference for teachers with college degrees. That situation was not hard to overcome if you had good teacher organization and knew something about the techniques of lobbying. State legislatures, one after another, turned their normal schools into colleges, with the right to grant degrees similar to those of the liberal arts colleges.

That provided many more teachers with degrees, but unfortunately the school boards continued to favor those teachers who had degrees from the old time liberal arts institutions.

That, too, could be remedied. All that was necessary was to pass laws that no one could be appointed to teach in the state schools who was not accredited with a certain number of hours of pedagogy, and very few of the liberal arts colleges included pedagogy in their curricula, even though its backers referred to it as a science.

A science is a structure of learning reared through long years of experimentation and research and resting upon a foundation of axioms. An axiom is a truth proven beyond question. If any axiom upon which a structure of science is reared should suddenly be disproven, — as, for instance, if it were discovered that a straight line is not the shortest distance between two points — the science topples. Pedagogy is a structure of theories most

of them unproven reared upon a foundation of maxims; and maxims are too often nothing but folklore passed along through the generations until the growing knowledge of the race destroys them. "Train up a child in the way he should go and when he is old he will not depart from it", is a maxim centuries old and tells us nothing, but suggests different things to different people. Various structures have been reared upon it.

Pedagogy as a science has not been welcome in many of the liberal arts colleges, yet they have been forced to include it so that those among their students who wish to become public school teachers can get their certificates. But while in college they must spend much less time studying what they hope to teach and much more time on "scientific" ways of teaching.

Among the products of pedagogical wisdom are many strange fads and fancies and teaching devices which affect the elementary grades, and especially our high schools; all reacting of course upon the colleges. Many of us old spooks can recall the first appearance of freshmen trained by progressive educationists. They were often brilliant and alert-minded, but too often they could not finish whatever they started. And the college teacher of today knows too well the freshman who had no memory drills and never learned the alphabet or multiplication tables "by heart," or memorable speeches and poems.

Dr. John Finley, a brilliant and charming person, was one of the patron saints of "progressive education," and this conservative old spook recalls with satisfaction hearing him say, "Yes, I think we were wise in insisting that the pupil should be allowed to choose his own piece of work; but we made a serious mistake in not insisting that he should be made to finish whatever he started." That's something gained.

Yes, things are certainly happening. The noises from backstage are growing louder; and this old ghost is eager for the curtain to rise and reveal a symbolic little four-room red school-house of olden days; increased in size of course, and in numbers, but notable for its simplicity. Among the actors in the coming drama he hopes there will be more of these having a God-given impulse toward teaching, unperverted by educational psychologists skilled in teaching teachers how to teach teachers to teach.   
Burgess Johnson

## The Gentle Reader

The Professor of Applied Psychology and the Professor of Machine Design ushered me into an anteroom that appeared to be hybrid between an optometrist's office and a garage workshop. The most prominent fixture was a kind of enlarged highchair bolted to the middle of the floor. Swung from a column mounted on its back, and attached by a complicated system of rods and wheels to a small electric motor on a table to the rear, was a clamp device resembling an old-fashioned photographer's head-rest.

"My colleague from the engineering department," the Professor of Applied Psychology explained, "has been kind enough to arrange all the mechanical equipment for the experiment. Unfortunately, I have no talent that way myself."

The Professor of Machine Design gave us a deprecating smile. "Of course," he said, "what you see here is just a rough model constructed more or less from scraps. Now that the psychology people seem sure of their results, I am planning to build a compact, self-contained unit with the power plant and linkages entirely concealed in the reading chair. I know all this looks like a Rube Goldberg stunt, but we wanted to throw it together as fast as possible for the preliminary tests. I have a fellow from a furniture shop in town helping me with the exterior design, and I really think we are going to come up with an attractive piece of furniture. Shouldn't cost much, either - not over a hundred, or a hundred and fifty, dollars."

"It will be well worth that price," added the Professor of Applied Psychology, "but mass production will eventually bring the cost down even lower. I should anticipate that within five years our chair will be a standard article of equipment for every private study. We're not sure, yet, what value it may have for the ordinary newspaper reader, and so on; however, I see no reason to doubt that someday it will be universally accepted."

"I'm afraid," I put in, "that I don't entirely grasp the essential difference between your machine and the other methods of rapid reading we have been hearing about in the last few years."

"Oh, there's all the difference in the world; in fact, they are hardly comparable at all, except in their common starting point and common objective. They begin with the premise that the human eye wastes time in the reading process, but all former systems relied on what might be

termed a voluntary increase of speed by the subject. Of course, the psychologists tried to show him how to accomplish this acceleration by ignoring words and focusing attention on phrases, or rather on thought units. In addition, they contrived various semimechanical stimuli to assure the maintenance of a steady reading pace. Nevertheless, in the end all such methods rested basically upon persuasion and exhortation. Human nature being what it is, the eye still tended to wander or to dawdle with isolated words. Worse yet, the controlled laboratory conditions could not be introduced into homes and libraries; therefore, release of the subject to his normal reading environment was always followed by relapse into previous bad habits - sometimes progressive, sometimes total and almost instantaneous. All these earlier experiments were interesting, but substantially they were failures."

"And your method does not suffer the same disadvantages?"

"Oh, no; we have changed all that. We do not attempt to encourage or stimulate the subject to the desired tempo; we force it upon him. If you would care to seat yourself in the chair - that's right - you see that I clamp the head-piece firmly against your temples. You notice that I now place a book on this rack, which lifts to the ideal reading position, and open it to any page. Observe that a window flap drops from the top of the rack into a position to screen all but one line of type at a time. Its vertical and lateral movements are synchronized with the head-piece; all you have to do is to turn a leaf quickly after the last line on each right-hand page has come into view."

"I have run into a little trouble with a device for turning the pages automatically," explained the Professor of Machine Design. "I'm still working on it."

Meanwhile, the Professor of Applied Psychology had fitted a textbook into the rack, and had dropped the flap into place. While he fiddled with various controls behind the chair, I read at my leisure a verso runninghead:

### 46 FIRST PRINCIPALS OF

"Now, if you are quite ready, sit perfectly relaxed and we will start the demonstration." He turned on a brighter light over the book rack and threw the switch of the electric motor. Instantly I felt my neck being twisted gently but irresistibly in a wide arc to the left; then to the right; then again to the left. Inexorable lines of

type streamed before my eyes:

must discriminate the terms *nerve, neurone, axon, dendrites, and synapse*. All are structural or organic SEE TABLE I except the last, which is *Classes of* a region of contact. An an- *Stimuli*

My head jerked to a rather unpleasant stop as I heard the motor turned off behind me.

"That gives you the idea of ordinary factual material," said the Professor of Applied Psychology. "Do you realize that you were reading at the rate of fifty pages per hour? I have observed students - good students, too - waste a whole hour of reading time on a five or ten-page assignment of this type. No doubt they imagined that they were giving themselves time to let the information sink in, but what they really were doing was to allow their eyes to play with words. Now let's try a bit of poetry."

He replaced the textbook of psychology with a hefty volume of readings, one of the kind used in survey-of-literature courses. Again, he tinkered with the controls and threw the switch of the motor. Although my neck was becoming stiff with unaccustomed exercise, I followed the lesson with as much appreciation as possible:

When the cloud is scattered,	Music wh
The rainbow's glory is shed.	Vibrates
When the lute is broken,	Odors wh
Sweet tones are remembered not;	Live wit

"You see," said the Professor of Applied Psychology, "that the method is

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## EXERCISES

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(Continued from p. 4)

equally well adapted to prose and verse. I tell you, there is no intrinsic reason why a complete college education can not be obtained in one year's time if we require the student to set a fast reading rate and stick to it. Within the near future, I hope to see our better students ready for graduate college at the age of seventeen or eighteen, and even younger when the machine is used in preparatory schools."

"I wonder," mused the Professor of Machine Design, a trifle wistfully, "whether there is any way we can also speed up our courses in shop work and mechanical processes over in the technical school."

"I don't see why not," answered the Professor of Applied Psychology.

"Do you think you are going to want one of our machines?" inquired the Professor of Machine Design while unscrewing the clamps around my ears.

"Thank you very much," I replied. "I've already had it!"

J. D. Thomas  
Rice Institute

Vol. I, No. 1 of "Abstracts of English Studies" has just been issued. Each month, it will abstract articles in such publications as *American Literature*, *Antioch Review*, *ELH*, *Modern Fiction Studies*, *N & Q*, *Shakespeare Quarterly*, etc. Subscription price is \$4 a year. Write to Lewis Sawin, Univ. of Colorado.

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## SPELLING PREFERENCE IN FRESHMAN COMPOSITION TEXTS

Thomas Clark Pollock in his article "Spelling Report" in *College English* for November, 1954, wrote: "Incidentally, I will not reveal the number of college teachers who assumed that a student misspells when he writes judgment with an e after the g, or fulfill with two ll's at the end."

Actually, Pollock ought not to be surprised at the tendency of college teachers to mark optional forms as wrong. Chances are the professors were remembering the "correct" forms listed in the texts they studied in freshman English.

An examination of thirteen freshman composition texts published since 1950 shows them even yet to be surprisingly reluctant to list optional spelling forms. Either in the illustration of spelling rules or in the "demon" lists themselves, one or more of the thirteen authors examined, without printing an optional form, recorded the following spellings: judgment, gauge, analyze, develop, movable, fulfill encyclopedia, mosquitoes, acknowledgment, mottoes, zeroes, buffaloes, gaiety, good-by, aeroplane, aesthetic, drought, rhyme, adviser, co-ordinate or coordinate, naive (with dieresis), mileage, gipsy, and cigarette.

The freshman composition instructor who marks spelling errors on the basis of the preceding list is likely to have trouble with an alert student who spots another spelling in a dictionary or in some other reputable work. All three dictionaries most likely to be employed by the student, *The American College Dictionary*, *Webster's New Collegiate*, and *Webster's New World*, record departures from the above list with the solitary exception of *mosquitos*, which is not given in *Webster's New Collegiate*.

Generally, the texts do present the preferred spelling forms as determined by these three dictionaries, but the two books that list the form *aeroplane* alone are not only departing from the recommendations of these dictionaries but are ignoring modern American usage as determined by other sources, such as the *United States Government Printing Office Style Manual*. The majority of the texts did note, for example, that judgement was chiefly British, but three gave judgment alone without any qualification.

Incidentally, the *American College Dictionary*, which perhaps makes closer distinctions between British and American usage than the others, is generally careful to label a word like judgement as "esp. British" rather than just British, since many of these "British" spellings may be found in American works, especially those of several generations ago. In the 1890's Hamlin Garland wrote *Main Travelled Roads* with a double l, a spelling now thought of as British. Even today American theater owners cling to the form theatre in the names of their businesses, and American

wedding invitations still come requesting the honour of one's presence.

Just why several of these texts by not printing the shorter optional forms apparently set themselves against such spellings as *gage*, *fulfil*, and *cigaret* is hard to determine. Certainly all three forms are widely used with the first of the three, *gage*, actually being the form employed by the Government Printing Office. Instructors following the recommendations of these textbooks are likely to have a difference of opinion with students employing dictionaries published by the Funk and Wagnalls Company, which consistently prefer the short forms.

Unlike Noah Webster, who was a simplified speller in his day, the authors of chapters on spelling in most freshman rhetoric manuals show conservative tendencies. In their own practice, for example, 9% of them prefer the long form catalogue compared to 3% who use catalog. (The fraction is caused by the fact that one rhetoric book used catalog in the text proper and catalogue in the index.)

Whatever the spelling preferences of the authors of these books might be, whether conservative or liberal, most of the texts—with a notable exception—would be improved by a fuller and more carefully qualified discussion of spelling usage and by a more frequent printing in the lists and illustrations themselves of the optional and variant forms.

Robert L. Coard  
Univ. of Alabama

## Prentice-Hall Handbook for Writers, 2nd Ed.

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## Composition Standards

(Continued from p. 1)

Moreover, the GCT was never administered to more than five thousand candidates, only one-fourteenth of the number who took the ECT last spring and, predictably, only one-twentieth of the number who will take it during the coming year. The prospect of recruiting readers for a GCT administered to 100,000 candidates staggers the imagination. And, judging from the difficulty we now have of obtaining reliable readers able to free themselves at the required time for the ECT, it defies the most optimistic speculation.

On this ground alone, use of a test like the GCT seems to me an impossibility. But that is not the sole ground I would present. Although practice varies widely from college to college, as far as we have been able to determine the ECT is used now for two purposes: as one of several factors in determining an applicant's qualification for admission, and as a means of exempting students from a freshman English course or of placing them in remedial, conventional, or advanced sections or courses.

The 200-800 scale of the ECT, granting its vulnerability and its abuse, lends itself far more readily to both purposes than the five-or-nine-point scale of the GCT, a scale not really convertible to any other form. The smaller scale, I am ready to agree, would probably serve well enough for colleges where the population is spread over the whole spectrum of ability; for the college which draws almost entirely from the upper quarter or third of the general population (as many Board colleges do and as more will under the growing selectivity in admission) such a scale is of very limited value, particularly for the purposes of assignment to graded sections or courses.

Like you, I am convinced that testing influences teaching, that test-makers are, in some measure, makers of curriculum. And I am aware that there is currently a disconcerting tendency of parents and students (perhaps of some teachers, as well) to look for devices to "beat" the objective items on the Board test. I must in fairness report, however, that questionnaires to teachers produce no support for my concern, the respondees almost unanimously disclaiming any alteration of program to fit the Board test and scouting the notion that coaching manuals are any part of their equipment. (We have in prepara-

tion now another questionnaire, differently worded, to sound the possibility once more.)

Setting these responses aside, I can assure you that the Board committee would be as happy as yours to see an essay test become once more a part of the achievement series—if for no other reason, as a means of emphasizing the importance of writing in education and of reinforcing the position of the English teacher who believes deeply in its importance but cannot get logistical support to make concentration on it possible.

In the past four years, we have pre-tested a variety of devices for introducing small amounts of "free" writing into the present test, none of which proved very satisfactory; twice we have put items of that kind into the test actually administered, both times with no success at all. The statistical relevance has been disconcertingly low on such items and the problem of getting them read is one beyond the skill of the very skillful Chief Reader who has for many years conducted the readings with something close to perfection.

Is there, then, no hope at all for what we, and you, earnestly desire? I cannot say for sure, but I know that no resource is being left unexamined. It is possible that recent experiments in "home" reading by teachers and other qualified persons will

yield results of importance to us, although a modification of that practice—common in some foreign countries where the number of applicants for few places in universities is beyond even what we expect in the coming decade—does not encourage us right now.

It might be possible to offer two tests, one primarily for admissions and the other for admissions and placement; whether that would complicate rather than relieve our problem, I think no one can predict. One supporter of the GCT has suggested that eight or ten reading centers, rather than two, might be set up to facilitate the recruiting of readers and to reduce costs of reading an essay test.

The cost of such a system would, I think, be less, though not substantially less than the one used when all readers came to an eastern campus for the GCT. And the problem of co-ordinating standards for many reading centers, a necessary step since the residence of the student is not necessarily in the same area as that of the college which he may attend, would indeed be a grave one.

It may be that some entirely new proposal will offer promise greater than any we have seen so far. Until it does, I think we shall have to go on as we are, producing an administrable and scorable test of proven reliability and validity and leav-

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## PSYCHOLOGY FOR STUDENTS OF LITERATURE

At present, I believe, the training for a Ph. D. in English sacrifices too much for the sake of coverage. In one course after another the candidate is led through the centuries of literature and assigned generous selections of writers, works and associated facts. Certainly after he has gone through only a fraction of this training he reaches a point of diminishing returns, learning less and less of significant principles and devoting himself more and more to the accumulation of details.

The results are bad. As a prospective teacher he might have used some of his time to receive training in speech and elocution, developing his ability to talk to an audience and to read aloud. At present, some Doctors of Philosophy are needlessly mediocre or poor in even such elements as diction.

As a scholar the candidate might have acquired a broader knowledge, particularly in subjects intimately related to literature, as history, sociology and psychology. Such training would have opened whole new problems of critical investigation, especially those problems which transcend circumscribed fields.

Practically all English departments have a policy against inbreeding, which, theoretically at least, recognizes the need to bring fresh knowledge and methods to the study of literature. This goal can be achieved not only by importing faculty from other institutions, but by obtaining scholars who are able to draw competently on other areas of knowledge.

One such area is psychology. It is true, there have been some amateurish, even ridiculous, efforts to apply psychology to literature, particularly in the psychoanalysis of dead writers. The answer to such practices is not, of course, that literary scholars should avoid psychology, but that they should learn how to use it.

Increasingly, experts in other areas are learning how to use it. Business firms, for example, as indicated so well in Vance Packard's best selling *The Hidden Persuaders*, have discovered that psychology can help them understand much about unconscious human motives, especially as involved in the responses of readers to advertisements.

Psychology can be equally helpful to literary scholars. It can tell us much about the creative process and about reactions and changes of all kinds in human personalities, including those fictional personalities who populate our works of literature.

Furthermore, some of our best contemporary writers, like Conrad Aiken, utilize intimate knowledge of psychiatry and can hardly be appreciated by critics who lack such knowledge.

In recent years a growing number of literary scholars have been deliberately studying psychology to help their professional research, as indicated, for example, by *Literature and Psychology*, published by the Conference on Literature and Psychology of the Modern Language Association. As scientific knowledge of human behavior advances, our need to utilize it will increase. I therefore believe that some training in psychology should be required for the Ph. D. in literature.

David M. Rein  
Case Institute of Technology

## Cold Punctuation or Snowed Under

To the melody of Peter Gray  
A freshman shivered class by class,  
but scared as sin to nod.  
He did not know a COMMA from  
a simple PER-I-OD.

Chorus:

Snow, ye flakes of winter,  
snow, ye flakes, heigh-ho,  
snow, ye flakes of winter,  
snow, snow, snow.

He'd rather chase some Joe or Pip  
on any winter lark  
than face his teacher whom he "loved" . . .  
end of QUOTATION MARK.

Chorus:

Each time the teacher called on him,  
his jaw went out of joint;  
he could not give, but froze into  
the EXCLAMATION POINT!

Chorus:

The teacher, kindest (?) in the land,  
believing him no shark,  
designed across his first exam  
a frosty QUESTION MARK.

Chorus:

His teacher said: "Here, take this chalk:  
now get the ball a-rollin'."  
The boy drew head and belly of  
a snowman: for a COLON.

Chorus:

"Down, boy," the teacher coaxed. "You're  
cold as our refectory hash.  
But first, try this—the easy one—"  
The freshe made a DASH—

Chorus:

He dashed to windows where he hoped  
a warmer prospect glowed.  
He did not leap, but cried: "I ain't  
a mixed-up kid . . . I'm snowed!"

Chorus:

Raymond Rosellep  
Loras College

## A Note on Joyce's "Araby"

The boy in Joyce's "Araby," like the street on which he lives, is blind to a part of life. His world is quiet and confined by order and custom except at brief intervals when he is turned loose with his playmates into a momentary, transitory life of freedom. He is 'like an uninhabited house' because his expectations, his yearnings for self-fulfillment have as yet been unrealized. He, like the house, has two storeys—one of order and custom; the other of unrestrained freedom.

In juxtaposition these two kinds of lives or worlds confound him in mystery and a blind is drawn so that he feels 'detached' from his neighbors or life in its complete meaning. The other houses on this street resemble the priest who has recently died; conscious models of convention who gaze 'at one another with brown (incomprehending) imperturbable faces'. They represent that life the boy wishes to exchange for a freer, more satisfying one.

This is the story of a boy who makes a heroic search for life. In spite of the 'dusk' which tends to blind him from it, in defiance of the 'sombre' brown houses, 'the silent street' which gives no answer to his many questions, this young hero will make his journey. Courageously he will walk through 'flaring streets jostled by drunken men and bargaining women' and he will find out life; but he will bear his 'chalice safely through a throng of foes.'

The difference between the world of order, restriction or custom and the world of unrestrained freedom is clearly brought out in the second paragraph of the story. Connotative of the boy's world or life of frustration and unfulfillment is the priest's house described as having 'air, musty from having been long enclosed.' This air is oppressive and heavy as a weight on the boy's spirit. To the boy, the waste room appears to be the priest's life which has been futile in its lack of connection with freedom or unrestrained freedom. 'The old useless papers' are the monotonous, fruitless acts of the priest's life and the 'paper covered books' represent vicarious experience lived out of touch with the real world.

Even the color of the book which fascinates the boy most is significant—yellow; suggestive of the freedom, unrestraint and promise he will later search for on his journey to Araby. The 'wild garden behind the house' symbolizes that world of freedom the young hero yearns for and which is hidden from him throughout the story; 'The central apple tree' represents those times of half-realization of freedom and unrestricted life unhampered by custom. The 'straggling bushes' along with the 'rusty bicycle-pump' can be classified along with the papers referred to earlier as symbolic of the priest and his world. In the eyes of the boy the life of the priest has come to a dead end in that he has left all his 'money' to institutions and 'furniture' to his sister.

The heroic aspect of this boy's quest is underscored by his traveling on a deserted train and by his remaining alone in the bare carriage without the company of other passengers. The author emphasizes this sense of aloneness throughout the narrative but it is particularly evident here. On his journey he sees 'ruinous houses' and a 'winkling river,' beacons of both the blind shadows of the life he is repudiating and the gleaming promise of freedom and insight of the life he is entering. His impatience to reach his destination or new life is suggested by the lighted dial of a clock which reads ten minutes to ten.

With impatience he eagerly enters the bazaar—but this long-desired life is disappointing to him. Here he still finds that sense of loneliness and blindness since 'the greater part of the hall was in darkness.' This is not the life he envisioned; there is no liberation in a 'silence like that which pervades a church after a service'. And that deadly gloom he has known in the room of the dead priest is still with him.

Life seems to be closed to him when he stops at the stall of the young girl who is talking and laughing with two men. He stops to examine porcelain vases and flowered tea sets—inadequate reminders of that wonderfully free, bright and satisfying life he had expected to find. He listens 'vaguely' to the discussion between the girl and the men; it means nothing to him. Life here is beyond his comprehension; he is barred from it by 'the great jars that stood like eastern guards at either side of the dark entrance of the stall.' They are like symbols of the adult world of commercial middle-class vulgarity which he will never be ready for.

In the last paragraph of the story it is

evident that the boy realizes his mistake. He is anguished because he knows definitely now that the life he has been seeking is not of his reach. He has attempted to cheat time and reach out for experiences beyond his maturity or understanding. For this reason he has found only darkness—the upper part of the hall was now completely dark. He is angry with himself for having thought he saw the promise of this life in the figure of Mangan's sister, and instead of finding that wildly exciting life of freedom and unrestraint he has found nothing but darkness in Araby.

James A. Fuller  
Kenmore, N. Y.

## Doctoral Studies

(Continued from p. 1)

scholarly knowledge and teaching strategy come together. It is this understanding which marks our best textbook writers and all of those who are fully successful in the classroom, and it is needed by every young man who sits in a committee charged with the planning and administration of a basic course. One of the revealing oddities which emerge from experience with committee work and teachers associations is that some Ph. D.'s do not recognize the existence of this sort of understanding.

Too many Ph. D.'s and doctoral candidates are weak in the personal qualities which make for good undergraduate teaching—"an infestious enthusiasm for the subject; understanding of and liking for young people; and stable, responsible, and confident personality." They seem to be excited about the analysis and/or writing of poetry and little else; they consider themselves rather too grand to teach most of the students in their classes; lacking basic confidence, they must perpetually defend

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their pose of elegant alienation.

The last point needs development. To our great profit, we have learned in CEA Institutes that the nation and the companies need creative individualists. Many of us have hastened to the conclusion that "creative individualism" and the eccentricity of the alienated "odd ball" are synonymous concepts.

Nothing could be further from the truth. There is now a considerable literature—see Fromm, Horney, Maslow, Reisman—which says that there is an abyss between touchy eccentricity, and creativity and uniqueness rooted in basic confidence.

And the anomaly of our situation is that the study of communication and literature in a friendly atmosphere is for our freshmen and sophomores a superb schooling in confidence and that all too few of our graduate school products have the confidence which yields the friendliness. Whatever they may have been as undergraduates, they have been dehumanized by the graduate department of English.

This is the sort of thing which the Ryan report, revised, might say to the one hundred distinguished professors who direct graduate study in English. We have said that they have done badly in recent years and that we believe they can and will do better. For we are confident in their ability to create both the programs and the social climate which will yield scholar teachers who know what they need to know, who will teach with skill and human understanding, who will in themselves embody the humility and the greatness of spirit which . . . to associate with our profession.

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In general, I agree with most of what is said in the Ph.D. Report. In particular, I like the recognition that we have a responsibility for training teachers. Such training will raise, not lower, the level of scholarship among us. And I like the emphasis on adequate linguistic work—probably the most neglected of all our duties.

As for objections: 1. The report doesn't seem to show any distinction of mind. God knows that phrase is tossed about too much; but as I read, I couldn't help thinking that this was the same old stuff—all very well, but dull.

2. I don't like the idea of a "weekly round-table course" in philosophy. Sounds too much like cocktail-party chatter about The Great Books.

3. On p. 7, the paragraph labeled "History" seems to mix up two quite different things: (a) literary history and (b) the acquisition of the great body of miscellaneous knowledge about the past which we all need (but usually don't have).

4. On the same page, I dislike the sentence, "Nourished by studies in art, philosophy, and history, this difficult discipline can be pursued. . . ." Isn't it the pursuer who ought to go on this diet? And "difficult discipline" is a jaw-breaker.

5. When somebody on p. 17 gets to talking about "the positivistic sciences" and "the value-judgment humanities," I gag. These are cheap catch-words. I've never been frightened by a positivist—whatever that is—and a lot of the value-judging I listen to seems screwy to me. The notion that we can define the humanities by opposing values to facts just isn't sound.

6. How do you propose to judge a man's teaching? There's the problem. Everybody agrees that teachers should be able to teach, but how do you get the information about a man's performance, and how do you judge him when you have the information? Personally, I never saw a good scholar who didn't give his students their money's worth, but I've known lots of allegedly good teachers who disseminated falsehood with an air.

7. On p. 25, I don't make sense of the series in the phrase about "knowledge of language as the material base of poetics, rhetoric, semantics, and style." What are all these things? Why are they treated as things of the same kind on the same level? And what is meant by calling language their "material base"?

James Sledd

University of California

William Riley Parker's speech delivered at the annual CEA meeting in September at Madison, Wisconsin, appears in the February issue of *College English*. It is entitled "Afterthoughts on a Profession: Graduate Training in the Humanities Today."

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## A WORD FOR CLICHES

At one time or another considerate writers have pointed out to members of almost all professions the clichés available to them in their daily work. As English teachers, we have been very kindly disposed toward educationists in this respect—enriching them with many suggestions concerning their favorite terms. We have, however, neglected ourselves somewhat—perhaps because of a martyr complex, our innate modesty, or it may be because of an inability to take it as well as dish it out. Others have been unwilling or unable to do anything for us. I would like to push my typewriter into this horrible gap.

I know of no better system to use than the question and answer method used several years ago when pursuing the cliché was almost the national sport. I am typing the answers—you may know where they came from:

Q. When we find a new work which has some merit and several virtues, or when we come across a textbook which has slightly more than the usual material, what should we say?

A. Here is God's plenty. (This may be used also at professional meetings.)

Q. When we are asked by a curious student what is distinctive about Milton's *Paradise Lost*, what reply is in order?

A. It's sublimity—and perhaps its universality.

Q. When we are correcting compositions and come upon a passage which seems to be poor but which we cannot quite tag, what shall we write on the margin?

A. Tighten expression. (If the instructor has started his career since 1950, he might wish to substitute, "You have somehow failed to communicate in a terse manner.")

Q. How should every civilized criticism of a student paper begin?

A. You have some very good things here, Mr. Jones . . . BUT

Q. When a student turns in a paper with several misspelled words, suggest a devastating pun for use.

A. Mr. Jones, typewriters do not usually misspell unless given definite encouragement.

Q. What shall we say when asked—what more than anything else contributed to Shakespeare's greatness?

A. Universality—and perhaps sublimity.

Q. How shall we describe a story, novel, poem, play, or movie which pleases us, but leaves us a little sad? or glad? or even luke-warm?

A. As heart warming.

Q. If the above-mentioned works of art are concerned with children, how shall we describe them?

A. As particularly heart-warming.

Q. What quality did Chaucer have which enabled him to rank with the first four English poets?

A. Universality and sublimity—despite a certain coarse realism.

Q. How should we criticize a research

paper which demonstrates little research?

A. Documentation is thin.

Q. How should we criticize a research paper which obviously was copied from an encyclopedia?

A. Documentation is intruding.

Q. What does most minor poetry lack?

A. Universality and usually sublimity—(or if the professor is very young—complexity, irony, paradox, ambiguity, symbolism.)

Q. Were there any other novels written in America besides *Huckleberry Finn*, *The Scarlet Letter*, and *Moby Dick*?

A. Yes. I leave you to select the fourth one.

Q. When a student says he can not possibly think of a topic for a theme, what should he be told?

A. Look in thy heart and write.

Q. What caused the bad poetry of the last century?

A. Dissociation of sensibility.

Q. What shall we say of a new poem that resembles Tennyson more than it resembles Auden—or whoever is fashionable by the time this is printed?

A. Excellent poetry of its kind, but I do not think it is the kind that should be written at this time.

Q. How can we explain hating a work which logically we can't explain hating?

A. The heart has its reasons.

Q. How should one describe that joke he heard during his sophomore year and has been telling himself ever since he began teaching?

A. As a pearl of wisdom.

Q. When the above pearl is told to a group which is bold enough (or foolish enough) not to laugh—what?

A. Casting a pearl before swine.

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Q. But when the class does laugh?  
A. A palpable hit, gentlemen, a palpable hit!

Q. What is any little bit tossed off by the author you have been specializing in for the past decade?

A. A veritable masterpiece.

Q. Why is T. S. Eliot finding a place among the favored poets of the century?

A. His universality—and sublimity.

James Binney  
West Chester STC

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